

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0791

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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TAGS: EEWT, PROP, UR, US

SUBJ: PROSPECTS FOR US-SOVIET TRADE

1. CONGEN NOTES THAT LENINGRAD PROPAGANDISTS HAVE RECENTLY TAKEN A MORE UPBEAT VIEW OF IMMEDIATE PROSPECTS IN US-SOVIET TRADE AND

:43\$85 59 9:835 7,89, 8 .943 94)3 - *943&9,3 :9,:)7 89,

8, ;832 9* "PRESIDENT FORD'S RELATIONS WITH CONGRESS."

2. THERE ARE USUALLY TWO SIDES OF THE COIN IN PROPAGANDA PRESENTATIONS HERE WHICH DEAL WITH EAST-WEST ECONOMIC RELATIONS. THE FIRST IS THE DE RIGEUR LITANY OF ECONOMIC ILLS AND CRISES PRESENTLY BESETTING THE CAPITALIST COUNTRIES. AFTER SUCH GLOOMY CHARACTERIZATIONS, ONE MIGHT NOT EXPECT ADVOCACY OF CLOSER ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION WITH THE US AND OTHER CAPITALIST COUNTRIES AS THEY REPORTEDLY PLUNGE FURTHER ALONG INTO INFLATION AND DECLINING PRODUCTIONS.

HOWEVER, THERE MUST STILL BE SOME JUICE IN THE GRAPE SINCE THE SAME PROPAGANDISTS TOUT THE IMMENSE ADVANTAGES OF EAST-WEST TRADE. GLOWING DESCRIPTIONS OF PROGRESS IN THE CURRENT FIVE-YEAR PLAN AND CLAIMS OF CEMA INTEGRATION AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY

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HAVE THEIR REQUIRED PLACE IN SOVIET LECTURE OUTLINES. BUT SO

DO SOME RATHER ROSY PREDICTIONS ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR SOVIET TRADE

WITH THESE "DECLINING PRODUCERS" OF THE WEST.

3. THE MFN/CREDITS ISSUE HAD BEEN TREATED AS A SORE POINT IN MOST PROPAGANDA PRESENTATIONS HERE. HOWEVER, LECTURERS IN THE POST-NIXON PERIOD HAVE BEGUN TO TAKE A MORE OPTIMISTIC VIEW. IN THE MOST RECENT INSTANCE, A LECTURER FLATLY STATED THAT THE "US CONGRESS WILL SOON EXTEND MFN TO THE SOVIET UNION AND OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES" SINCE THIS HAD BEEN "AGREED BETWEEN FORD AND THE CONGRESS." HE DESCRIBED THE BENEFICIAL EFFECT THIS WOULD HAVE ON US-SOVIET TRADE, ADDING THAT AN EVEN MORE SIGNIFICANT ASPECT WOULD BE EXTENSION OF MASSIVE CREDITS FROM THE EXIM, IBRD, AND PRIVATE BANKS. IN CASE THE AUDIENCE MISSED THE POINT, THE LECTURER/PROPAGANDIST DESCRIBED THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE SIBERIAN GAS DEPOSITS AND CONCLUDED EUPHORICALLY THAT "SUCH CREDITS HAVE NEVER BEFORE EXISTED IN HISTORY."
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